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Senate

The Senate met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. STEVENS].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal spirit, the author and finisher of our faith, as the days blend together and the August recess beckons, we pause to simply praise You. We praise You for Your glory and strength, for You are majestic and powerful. We praise You for keeping us from falling when we have walked in slippery places. We praise You for the gifts of borrowed heartbeats or a fresh sunrise. We praise You for our Senators who labor with faithfulness for freedom.

Lord, teach us today how to master ourselves that we may honor You. Give us wisdom to number our days and maximize the opportunities presented by the passing minutes. Strengthen our resolve to nurture our families and to leave an exemplary legacy for those who follow us. Empower each of us to meet life's vicissitudes with the calm assurance that You rule in the affairs of humanity.

We pray this in Your loving Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2361, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2361) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed that the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment, and the Senate agree to the same, signed by a majority of the conferees on the part of both Houses.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of July 28, 2005.)

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, we have several unanimous consent requests with respect to our schedule today. Following the time for the two leaders, we will consider the Interior appropriations conference report under a 20-minute time limit. Following that debate, we will return to the energy conference report for final closing remarks. At the conclusion of that debate, we will have a series of rollcall votes on these measures. I would anticipate those votes occurring sometime around 10:45 or so this morning.

After those votes are completed, we will return to the gun manufacturers liability bill. We have an agreement for a limited number of amendments, with time agreements on each of those. Therefore, we will have votes throughout the afternoon until passage of that legislation.

Finally, we will also consider the highway conference report when it becomes available from the House. It is not yet here. All Senators should be aware that we will have a substantial number of rollcall votes today, as many as 13 over the course of the day. Therefore, we ask that Senators remain close to the Chamber throughout the day to facilitate the votes and our remaining business.

VITIATION OF UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 2985

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order with respect to the Legislative branch appropriations conference report be vitiated.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, since 2001 when stem cell research first captured our Nation's attention, I have said many times the issue will have to be reviewed on an ongoing basis—and not just because the science holds tremendous promise, or because it is developing with breathtaking speed. Indeed, stem cell research presents the first major moral and ethical challenge to biomedical research in the 21st century.

In this age of unprecedented discovery, challenges that arise from the nexus of advancing science and ethical considerations will come with increasing frequency. How can they not? Every day we unlock more of the mysteries of human life and more ways to promote and enhance our health. This compels profound questions—moral questions that we understandably struggle with both as individuals and as a body politic.

How we answer these questions today—and whether, in the end, we get them right—impacts the promise not only of current research, but of future research, as well. It will define us as a

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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